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W. H. Smith at Tavistock Grammar School. He went to St. John's College, Cambridge, and was 9th Wrangler in 1850. He was for some time a master at Rossall and St. Paul's Schools. In 1861 he was called to the Bar and joined the firm of W. H. Smith & Son as managing partner. In 1885 he retired from active business and went to reside in his native county of Devonshire. He took an active part in the business of the county and was High Sheriff for 1893-4. For some years he was in failing health and died on 31st of March 1901.

He was elected a Fellow of the Society on the 9th of February 1855, but has not communicated any papers to the Society.

Charles Meldrum was born in 1821 at Kirkmichael, in Banffshire. He was educated at Marischal College and University, Aberdeen, and was Lord Rector's Prizeman in 1844. He entered the Bombay Education Department in 1846, and two years later was appointed Professor of Mathematics at the Royal College of Mauritius. In 1851 he founded the Meteorological Society in that Colony, and was for many years its Secretary. In 1862 he was appointed Government Observer. The principal work done at the Observatory, which was situated at Port Louis, consisted in the examination and tabulation of ships' logs. As it was surrounded by hills the locality was unsuitable for a meteorological station, and in 1863, owing to Dr. Meldrum's efforts, in which he received strong support from Sir E. Sabine, the old observatory was sold preparatory to building a new one at Pamplemousses. The foundation-stone of the new observatory, the Royal Alfred Observatory, was laid in 1870 by H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh. It cannot be said that the new site was very happily chosen, as the ground is marshy and fever-stricken. The Royal Alfred Observatory was provided with meteorological and magnetic instruments, a 6-inch Cooke equatorial, a 3-inch transit, and a 4-inch photoheliograph. From 1880 to 1885 sun-pictures were taken regularly on a scale of 4 inches, and from 1885 to the present time on the enlarged scale of 8 inches to the Sun's diameter.

Dr. Meldrum was more interested in meteorology than astronomy, and his principal work was in connection with the law of storms in the Indian Ocean. He discovered that the diurnal barometric variation was very regular, and that a slight deviation indicated strong disturbance at a more or less great distance. His knowledge of the prevailing winds, &c., enabled him to advise vessels proceeding from Mauritius where cyclones would be met.

The British Association Reports for 1874 and 1876 contain papers in which he tabulated the number of cyclones in the years 1856 to 1875, their duration, the distances they travelled, and the areas over which the wind blew with the force of a strong gale. He compared these with Wolf's relative sun-spot numbers, and

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concluded that cyclones were fewest and least severe at a Sun-spot minimum and the converse at a maximum. He also tabulated the rainfall in different years at a large number of stations distributed over the Earth, and concluded that the total amount of rain which fell on the Earth was above the average at times of sun-spot maxima and below at minima. Neither of these conclusions has as yet been sufficiently confirmed to be beyond doubt.

Dr. Meldrum was elected a Fellow of the Society on the 11th of March 1870. He communicated to the Society in 1873 a paper on "Star Showers seen at Mauritius."

The degree of LL.D. was conferred on him by the University of Aberdeen in 1876, and in the same year he became a Fellow of the Royal Society. He was made C.M.G. in 1886, and served as a member of the Council of Government of Mauritius from 1886 to 1896. After his retirement in 1896 he lived in Edinburgh, where he died on the 28th of August 1901.

Sir Cuthbert Peek, the only child of Sir William Henry Peek, the first Baronet, was born on the 30th of January 1855, and succeeded to the baronetcy on the death of his father in 1898. He was educated at Eton and Pembroke College, Cambridge. After leaving Cambridge he went through a course of instruction in astronomy and surveying, and put his knowledge into practice in two journeys across the unfrequented parts of Iceland, taking regular observations of the latitude, longitude, and dip of the needle. On his return to England he established a small observatory with a 3-inch equatorial in his father's grounds. In 1882 he accompanied the British expedition to Australia to observe the transit of *Venus*, the party consisting of Captain Morris, R.E. (in charge of the expedition), Lieut. Darwin, R.E., and an assistant. Mr. Peek took with him a 6·4-inch equatorial and a portable observing hut. The expedition arrived at Brisbane on the 27th of October, and a few days later left for Jimbour, a well-chosen station, with an uninterrupted view of the horizon in all directions. The six weeks preceding the transit of *Venus* were occupied with observations of double stars, nebulæ, and clusters, and especially of the nebula surrounding η *Argus*, on which Mr. Peek published an interesting memoir after his return to England in August 1883. On the 7th of December, the morning of the transit of *Venus*, the sky was completely overcast, although there had been only two cloudy nights in the previous six weeks. In 1884 Mr. Peek built the Rousdon Observatory and furnished it with a 6·4-inch Merz refractor equatorially mounted, a small transit instrument, and a sidereal clock. From this date he carried on a continuous series of observations of variable stars of long period, and reports of his observations will be found each year since 1887 in the February number of the *Monthly Notices*. When Mr. Peek's observations began the difficulties of

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